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Advancement of women

Letter dated 9 March 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the recommendations of the Colloquium on the impact of violence against women on the family, which was organized by the Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development, a non-governmental organization, and held in Doha from 19 to 20 November 2008 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 56 (a).

(*Signed*) Nassir Abdulaziz **Al-Nasser**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 9 March 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Colloquium on the impact of violence against women on the family, Doha, 19-20 November 2008: recommendations for Governments and other stakeholders

International legal framework

Ratify United Nations human rights treaties, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and the Optional Protocols to CEDAW and CRPD;

Ensure implementation of all human rights treaties, in particular reflecting their provisions in national legislation;

Utilize the reporting process established by the human rights treaties to highlight violence against women and children;

Initiate a process of discussion of reservations to human rights treaties, particularly CEDAW;

Ensure implementation of regional human rights instruments;

Consider initiating a process to develop an instrument on women's human rights and violence against women for the Arab Charter on Human Rights.

Advocacy

Launch national campaigns with the participation of women and men to support the Secretary-General's campaign on violence against women, including by adopting national action plans or strategies to eliminate this human rights violation;

Explore the linkage among poverty, economic disempowerment and violence against women and children.

Law and policy reform

Ensure that legal provisions address all forms of violence against women, including sexual violence, psychological violence, harassment and harmful cultural and traditional practices;

Review all procedural and evidentiary rules so that they provide a gender-sensitive legal framework;

Ensure that laws, policies and programmes address the special needs of migrant women workers, refugee, displaced and trafficked women and women with disabilities.

Men and boys

Emphasize the responsibility of men in the elimination of violence against women;

Raise the awareness of boys in respect to violence.

Elimination of stereotypes and transformation of attitudes

Address all stereotypical ideas and attitudes about the roles of women and men in society, including through education at all levels, modification of curricula and educational tools and the portrayal of women, men, girls and boys in the media;

Emphasize the positive role that media can play in the elimination of all forms of violence against women and children;

Take measures to build the confidence of girls and to ensure that girls are valued;

Underline that HIV/AIDS is a cause and a consequence of violence against women.

Data collection and research

Strengthen data collection, including by developing indicators on the number of incidents as well as the prevalence of all forms of violence against women;

Create a regional observatory on violence against women to collect statistics, research, good practices and lessons learned, as well as information on the impact of strategies to address violence against women;

Initiate research into the root causes and consequences of violence against women, including in respect of risk factors.

Partnerships to eliminate violence against women

Emphasize that the elimination of violence against women is a shared responsibility of the entire community and requires a multisectoral approach;

Underline the important role of parliaments, national human rights institutions and civil society, including religious institutions, in advocacy, awareness-raising and the provision of services to address violence against women.

Building national capacity

Ensure that police and criminal justice curricula and training include human rights and issues relating to violence against women;

Build the capacity of health sector professionals, in particular medical practitioners, in relation to human rights and issues relating to violence against women, including issues in the curricula of such professionals at all levels, as well as in recurrent education and training;

Convene judicial colloquia and workshops to provide judges with an opportunity to learn from one another's experiences on the implementation of human rights instruments and approaches to addressing violence against women.

Follow-up

The Supreme Council for Family Affairs in Qatar should be encouraged, with the participation of all stakeholders, to create a national strategy on violence against women;

The Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development (DIIFSD) should convene a colloquium on violence against women every two years and serve as a regional umbrella organization for the collection of research on good practices and lessons learned. It should also establish a network on violence against women;

DIIFSD, in partnership with the United Nations, regional institutions and non-governmental organizations, should explore the possibility of convening an international conference on violence against women in 2010.